DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 279 917 CG 019 725

AUTHOR Benjamin, Libby; Walz, Garry R.
TITLE Counseling Students and Faculty for Stress Management.
INSTITUTION ERIC Clearinghouse on Counseling and Personnel Services, Ann Arbor, Mich.
SPONS AGENCY Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE 87
CONTRACT 400-86-0014
NOTE 40p.
AVAILABLE FROM ERIC/CAPS, 2108 School of Education, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1259
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055) -- Information Analyses - ERIC Information Analysis Products (071)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Burnout; *College Faculty; *College Students; Counseling; Faculty College Relationship; Higher Education; Job Satisfaction; *Stress Management; *Stress Variables; Student Adjustment; Student Needs; *Teacher Student Relationship; Work Environment

ABSTRACT

This monograph was written to enhance the college or university faculty member's understanding of stress as it impacts upon both students and faculty, and to help faculty members cope with the stressors in their own lives and intervene with students to reduce stress. Stress is defined and sources of distress are identified. Research is cited which examines sources of faculty or counselor stress. Issues such as time, money, reputation, significance, and concerns for the future are considered. Burnout, a distinctive kind of job-related stress, is examined as it relates to college and university personnel. Factors in the academic environment which contribute to stress and may lead to burnout are identified within the categories of role dynamics, responsibility, occupation, job satisfaction, career paths, and the organization. Research exploring sources of student distress are also reviewed and contributors to student stress are outlined within the categories of instruction, competition, organization of time, adjustment to college, administrative problems, social adjustment, finance, housing, and transportation. Four preventive strategies and five combative strategies to help faculty members cope with stress are presented and six behaviors for faculty members to use in helping students handle stress are suggested. (NB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

FD279917

COUNSELING STUDENTS AND FACULTY FOR STRESS MANAGEMENT

Libby Benjamin
Garry R. Walz

CG 019725

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

ERIC/CAPS
Educational Resources Information Center
Counseling and Personnel Services Clearinghouse

Office of Educational Research and Improvement U.S. Department of Education

This publication was prepared with funding from the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education under contract no. 400-86-0014. The opinions expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the positions or policies of OERI or the Department of Education.

ERIC COUNSELING AND PERSONNEL SERVICES CLEARINGHOUSE
School of Education
The University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-1259
Published by ERIC/CAPS

1987

PREFACE

Academic life can be extremely stressful for both students and faculty. Demands for increased academic excellence, mounting cost consciousness, and changing priorities and goals in themselves provide a full menu of stressors for the most hardy. An added ingredient, however, is the generally held perception that academic life provides a refuge from the rigors and pressures of the outside world. To the extent that faculty members have internalized this view, they may be not only unprepared for the stressful reality of their world but also unable to cope personally or to be of assistance to students.

This monograph, recognizing the interrelationship between faculty and student stress, aims to enhance the faculty members' understanding of stress as it impacts upon both students and faculty, and to help them cope more ably with the stressors in their own lives as well as intervene with students to minimize stress. We hope also that this volume will be helpful to counselors and student services specialists who provide assistance to both students and faculty.

One of the more damaging effects of stress is the sense of isolation and powerlessness it engenders —leaving individuals feeling alone and without resources to respond. Faculty members should realize that they are not alone or weak because they are experiencing stress and that they can take positive actions which will lessen both their own stress and that of those whom they teach. In a real sense, a person who strives to learn about stress to help another--whether student or faculty member--is twice taught. As such, that individual is an "A" student in learning about one of life's most significant challenges.

Libby Benjamin
Garry R. Walz

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction	1
Stress Defined	3
Sources of Distress	7
Faculty/Counselor Distress	11
Burnout	15
Student Distress	19
What Can We Do About Stress?	23
Summary	35
Reference List	37

INTRODUCTION

Stress pervades our daily living. The catchwords in today's society--faster, bigger, better, more efficient--push us to achieve more in less time and create an aura of dog-eat-dog competition. We do our best to respond. We strive to keep up with technology and the rapid rate of change; we try to balance the pressures of our jobs with family obligations; we jog, change our diets, and join health clubs to keep fit and relieve tension; we gulp antacids and gobble pills to quell our uneasy stomachs and soothe our spirits. But the human psyche is not always equal to the task. Increasingly we are reading about the high cost of stress in the work environment--absenteeism, high rate of turnover, burnout--and in people's personal lives--heart disease, stomach problems, and other psychosomatic illnesses. That the impact of stress has caused widespread concern is attested to by the expanding number of journal and magazine articles, books, and television programs devoted to the topic. Researchers, human scientists, organizational leaders, and the general public are giving increased attention to understanding stress and its relationship to 'the good life,' to a constantly renewing sense of purpose and commitment in work, to enhancement of feelings of reward and fulfillment in social and personal experiences.

While the public has long been aware of the intense pressures abounding in the corporate world, only recently have leaders in academia begun to realize that negative stress prevails in their world as well. Research has shown that individuals engaged in human services are more subject to stress than workers in product-oriented occupations. Because teachers and counselors spend their lives in attempts to help others, they are prime potential victims of stress. And those who come to the university to learn do not escape unscathed. Intense competition for grades and for slots in graduate schools, anxiety about examinations, and the problems associated with choosing a career and dividing time for a satisfying social life with the necessity for study can be major sources of tension for students.

In this monograph the authors attempt to define stress, to share the results of research concerning sources of faculty and student distress, and to suggest ways in which the university administration and both faculty and students may ward off this disabling disease and maintain the sense of vitality and enthusiasm in the university setting for all who labor there.

STRESS DEFINED

Much confusion exists about the meaning of stress. We know that some stressors can motivate and stimulate and push people beyond the limits of what they believe themselves capable. But the symptoms and harmful effects of stress have been emphasized so frequently that the word itself now connotes little short of illness, a dis-ease, something to be rigorously avoided. So is stress healthful or injurious? Invigorating or enervating? Does it produce enthusiasm or ennui? Exhilaration or anomie?

Before the work of Hans Selye became known, it was generally believed that differing external events produced differing physiological and psychological reactions within the person. Pleasure, excitement, or anticipation elicited one kind of response; fear, anxiety, intense pressure another. Selye, a Canadian physician who began his research in the 1930's, found that regardless of whether the stressor was positive or negative (pleasureful or painful), one could predict a common set of reactions. Thus, the radiant bride walking shakily down the aisle experiences much the same sensations as the young prodigy auditioning for a music scholarship or the thief caught red-handed or the faculty member who knows that his contract is in jeopardy. Selye called this group of physiological and psychological responses the General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS). As Selye explained, during its response to stress, the body changes in a number of ways to mobilize its defenses and protect itself from damage. These changes (the GAS) consist of three stages: alarm, resistance, and exhaustion.

In the alarm stage, the pituitary and adrenal glands pump hormones into the bloodstream that accelerate heart rate and respiration, raise blood pressure, increase perspiration, increase muscle tension, and cause blood to flow from the extremities to vital organs, making the hands and feet cold. This internal gearing-up has been called the 'fight or flight' response. Thus, the body gets ready to confront or try to escape the stressor. Once the individual has perceived the alarm (threat, challenge, stimulus), the body begins to make internal adjustments to restore its equilibrium. This is the resistance stage. Whether the individual tries to evade or conquer the stressor, he/she takes some action or readjusts his/her thinking so as to reduce the severity of the situation. If this is successful, the person avoids the third stage, exhaustion. When the stressor(s) continues unabated

and the body's defense mechanisms fail to work, however, fatigue occurs, the body succumbs to the effects of stress, and the person may become ill or even die.

Miller (1979) emphasized the negative side of stress when he defined it in the following way:

> Stress begins with anxiety--a disturbance arising from some kind of imbalance within us. All of us, each day, experience some kind of threatening condition or disharmony. This anxiety leads to tension. Tension is a physical reaction to the anxiety. When we are tense, nervous impulses cause changes in our body. When tension reaches a degree of intensity that has an adverse effect on the body, we are under stress. (p. 8)

But current thinking recognizes that certain features are common to any kind of stress reaction, which Selye implied in the 1960s in his first scientific definition of stress:

> Stress is the state manifested by a specific syndrome which consists of all the nonspecifically induced changes within a biological system. (Selye, 1978, p. 54)

Some years later, he said simply that stress is "the nonspecific response of the body to any demand made upon it" (Selye, 1974, p. 14). He also stated the following:

> No one can live without experiencing some degree of stress all the time. You may think that only serious disease or intensive physical or mental injury can cause stress. This is false. Crossing a busy intersection, exposure to a draft, or even sheer joy are enough to activate the body's stress mechanism to some extent. Stress is not even necessarily bad for you; it is also the spice of life, for any emotion, any activity causes stress. (Selye, 1978, p. xv.)

Research increasingly corroborates the fact that unabated stress can result in poor health or chronic illness. Stress has been linked with several disorders that usually occur during stressful events, such as coronary disease, stomach ulcers, respiratory problems, backaches, high blood pressure, rheumatoid arthritis, thyroid disease, and even cancer. Selye has called these psychosomatic diseases the 'stress diseases' or 'diseases of adaptation' (from the General Adaptation Syndrome). Emotional factors play a critical role in causing these physical problems, which affect the weakest or most vulnerable parts of the body. Psychological difficulties may also result from stress, such as anxiety, depression, hypertension, rigidity, and defensiveness, among others.

Stress has also been correlated with life changes as a result of research conducted by Holmes and Rahe (1967), who developed what they call the 'Social Readjustment Rating Scale.' Included in this instrument are such seemingly innocuous events as 'change in church activities,' 'change in number of family gatherings,' 'vacation,' and 'Christmas season!' The fundamental principle is that too many changes, either positive or negative in nature, can overload the GAS and result in illness.

For most people, however, stress is a loaded term that represents unhealthy and/or harmful conditions. In an attempt to distinguish between stress that invigorates and motivates and stress that inhibits or cripples, Selye coined the term 'eustress,' 'eu' being a Greek prefix meaning 'good.' Thus, eustress includes the kinds of stimuli that are the 'spice of life,' and distress relates to those events that create tension and anxiety and diminish productivity.

Several other points should be emphasized in any discussion of stress. First, what may be distressful to one person may be excitingly challenging to another. The chance to compete in a bridge tournament against the giants of the game could fill one person with a delicious, albeit tremorous, thrill, and result in that individual's playing the best bridge of his or her life. To a less confident card enthusiast, the knowledge that he or she would be pitted against the greats could overwhelm the mind so much that the person could become confused and make stupid mistakes.

Second, the same event can be distressful at one time and eustressful at another. Every one of us has experienced this phenomenon. A good day at work, compliments from peers, a salary raise, or excitement about a much desired coming event, can imbue the person with a sense of happiness and well-being that makes the kids' squabbles seem almost amusing. A difficult day at work, strong anxiety about a personal relationship, subjection to hours of constant noise, or lack of sleep, can stretch a person's tolerance for stress to the extent that the kids' squabbles become the catalyst for blinding rage and a desire to lash out at the nearest target.

Third, and a correlate of the first point, whether an event causes distress or eustress depends on the person's perception of the event or situation. Lazarus (1966), for example, regards an individual's reaction to stress as the 'cognitive appraisal' of the triggering event. Thus, a person reacts to stressors in accordance with his or her personal resources for adapting. If the demands of the stressor appear to tax the individual beyond his or her capabilities, it may be perceived as a

threat; if the person feels able to cope with the situation or occurrence, then the stressor may be perceived as a positive challenge. In addition, if the stressor appears inconsequential or unimportant to the person, then the chance for distress is less likely. For example, a salary cut might cause only slight and temporary anxiety for the college professor who is financially secure; for the instructor who is trying to start a family and has just bought a new home, reduction in pay could be regarded as catastrophic.

Finally, how we behave in a given situation is the product of a combination of factors: the environment, the magnitude of the stressor, what has gone before, a mental assessment of our ability to handle the stressor, our value system (i.e., what is important to us), our physical condition, and just plain habit. Because our typical responses have been learned over a period of time, with help and the desire to change we can un-learn them. That we are in control of how we respond, for the most part, lends an aura of positivism to the issue of stress and its potential impact, and to the role of the counselor in assisting individuals to cope with stress by modifying their attitudes and feelings, changing their customary patterns of behavior, and thus decreasing their vulnerability to stressful events or conditions.

SOURCES OF DISTRESS

Are there some conditions or situations that research has pegged as stressful? Are there some 'givens' when it comes to what induces a stress reaction? Are there some people who feel the effects of stress keenly and others who seem to be able to handle any change or challenge with equanimity? These questions are difficult to answer because individuals' perceptions and adaptive responses differ so widely and stress is so dependent upon the interaction between person and environment.

Miller (1979) divides sources of stress into two groups: self-imposed and situational. The first category involves setting excessively high standards for oneself or having unrealistic expectations concerning one's abilities. For example, some people believe that they cannot make a mistake, they must know all the answers, or they must be the best in whatever they attempt to do. To err, to falter, or to fail is demeaning in the extreme and highly damaging to their egos. Or they feel that everyone should love, respect, and praise them; to be slighted or criticized becomes cause for anxiety and alarm. The greater the gap between expectations and fulfillment, the higher the level of distress.

Situational distress occurs when individuals epxerience conflict between their own values and the values of others, interpersonal disharmony, challenges beyond their capabilities to respond, threats to emotional or physical well-being, time constraints, or lack of resources to accomplish a task, among others.

Woolfolk and Richardson (1978) state that a few emotionally-laden and highly evaluative beliefs about ourselves and our environment are responsible for the most distressful situations. These negative notions cause us to have unrealistic expectations for ourselves and others. Some of these stressful thoughts include the following:

1. Worry helps prevent future mistakes or bad fortune.
2. We are failures because we don't measure up to the expectations of others.
3. We are inferior or disadvantaged, which makes it hard or impossible for us to lead rewarding lives.
4. Life is a series of win-lose contests, each requiring that we put our self-esteem on the line.

5. Others should behave in certain ways; that they don't causes us to feel frustrated, angry, and morally indignant.
6. Life should be free of discomfort; that it isn't causes anxiety and frustration.

Still other cognitive sources of distress are negative self-talk (believing one will fail or appear stupid or be unequal to a task), catastrophizing (believing that the worst possible outcome will occur and that it will be intolerable), and worrying about situations over which one has no control (terrorism in Europe, the national debt, being involved in a plane crash). Any of these irrational ideas can color our thinking and cause us to respond in ways that are detrimental to good health and peace of mind.

Adams (1978) has divided stressors into four basic types:

1. recent events on the job
2. recent events away from work
3. on-the-job conditions
4. away-from-the-job conditions

Job-related events might be increased class size or reduction in the student body; events apart from work might relate to having a new baby or moving to a new home. Job-related conditions might include conflict with one's colleagues or the inability to get financial support for research; conditions apart from work might relate to money concerns or family difficulties. Kremer and Owen (1979) categorize stressors in three ways: perceptions of harm or loss (becoming ill, losing one's job), threat (being afraid of losing one's job, worrying about paying the bills), and challenge (starting a new course, being promoted).

Researchers have been unable to identify with any rigorous clarity personality traits that predispose individuals to being candidates for stress-related illnesses. Freudenberger (1982) determined that certain types of individuals may be prone to stress. People suffering stress reactions, in clinical self-report studies, depict themselves generally as loners, unable to express feelings (i.e., to get past the resistance stage of the GAS by voicing their anxieties and concerns and thus experiencing a measure of relief) or be assertive. Many of them look to their jobs for fulfillment and identity, not being able to find reward from personal interactions, yet needing to be accepted and liked. They give to others to the point of becoming drained but refuse to request help or rely on anyone other than themselves.

Rosenman and Friedman (1983) have found consistent evidence relating coronary heart disease to certain personality and behavioral traits, such as the Type A personality. Type A behavior is typified by:

> A chronic, incessant struggle to achieve more and more in less and less time, and if required to do so, against the opposing efforts of other things or other persons. It is not psychosis or a complex or worries or fear or phobias or obsessions, but a socially acceptable--indeed often praised--form of conflict. Persons possessing this pattern also are quite prone to exhibit a free-floating but extraordinarily well-rationalized hostility. As might be expected, there are degrees in the intensity of this behavior pattern. (Friedman & Rosenman, 1974, pp. 67-68)

Rosenman and Friedman (1983) list 23 characteristics common to individuals with Type A personalities, among them self-control, self-confidence, competitiveness, tenseness, impatience, inability to relax away from work, suppressed hostility, orientation toward achievement, and the denial of failure. In contrast, Type B's are able to relax without guilt, may be less intensely motivated to achieve, move and talk more slowly, are content to do one thing at a time, exhibit patience, and take themselves far less seriously than their Type A counterparts. No one is pure Type A or Type B. Rather, each of us is a unique mixture and possesses certain characteristics of both types to some extent. It is when the facets of our personalities seem to cluster at the ends of the continuum from A to B that we can consider ourselves more one than the other.

At the time of this writing, however, linkages between specific personality characteristics and stress-related illness are only beginning to be identified. What appears to be essential for healthy functioning is that each individual discover a pace in life and work that suits his or her adaptive capacities. For inefficiency and inactivity are as agonizingly stressful to the hard-driving individual as galvanized, multi-facted activities are to those who approach life in more relaxed fashion. Of major importance is the extent to which people feel in control of their lives, able to monitor events and conditions to their own satisfaction, to set their own pace, to make what they do and are correspond closely enough to their expectations that when the unexpected does occur (a major stressor), they are able to resist successfully and set their world to rights without becoming debilitated or ill.

A person who is able to withstand stress without adverse effects has been called the 'Hardy Personality Type' (Kobasa, Hilker, & Maddi, 1979). This individual is oriented toward commitment (versus alienation), control (versus powerlessness),

and challenge (versus threat). Such individuals believe in themselves, feel confident that they can control whatever happens to them, and perceive change as an opportunity or challenge rather than a threat. When they do undergo a stressful incident, they have the ability to move beyond the shock and alarm stage, take appropriate action, and look for positives in whatever has happened. Instead of being paralyzed or incapacitated with worry or grief or anxiety, they are able to work through the difficulties and problems and regain a sense of control over their lives.

Emphasized throughout this discussion is the fact that most stressors are in themselves neutral, and because the quality of individual response to a particular stressor is so crucial to its effects on the person, stressors do not of necessity produce stressful reactions. Adverse emotional and physical consequences are usually a result of the way an individual perceives particular events or conditions.

FACULTY/COUNSELOR DISTRESS

There is much talk about stress in the corporate world, usually relating to managers who have become disabled personally and professionally by the high stress in their jobs. Corporations that are sensitive to problems engendered by stress have offered employees paid vacations or athletic club memberships, constructed health clubs in their own buildings, and created flex-time or reduced working hours. Recognizing that individuals need to maintain control over what they do--their work--and to have that work recognized and valued, some leaders in business and industry have tried to eliminate the sense of anonymity and promote the sense of worker pride and ownership by having employees take responsibility for what they produce. Academic analysts, however, have been slow to adopt such policies and to apply what business executives have learned to their own settings.

Current educational administrative policies do not encourage creativity or growth. The mode is contraction--less money and fewer resources to accomplish the same or more tasks: more courses to teach, more students to instruct or counsel, more committees to serve on or chair, more demands for publishing scholarly research. In many institutions faculty members with or without tenure have been released, and most have experienced reductions in funds for travel, for graduate-student support, for office supplies, for salary increases. Thus, there is increasing and widespread dissatisfaction with the quality of academic life, and many educators who entered the profession with idealism and high expectations have become frustrated because they feel powerless to change the problems they encounter daily.

As has been stated, stress can best be understood as the product of interactions between three elements: the environment (the organizational or social climate, interpersonal relationships, operating procedures), the nature of the stressor (nagging, daily pressures or life-threatening events), and the individual's vulnerability to stress (differences in coping styles, suport groups, health history, values). In his research Buck (1972) observed that the work environment is perhaps most often central in the experience of stress among adults, and Swent and Gmelch (1977) found educational administrators estimated that 75 percent of the stress they felt came from their jobs. Conditions of one's job and events related to work, then, become critical components of the stress syndrome. Cooper and Marshall

(1976) determined that professionals involved in interaction with other people were more vulnerable to work-related stress than workers in product-oriented organizations. This fact is verified by studies of police, administrators, teachers, dentists, and other professionals. In many occupations, productivity is considered the measure of success, an outcome difficult if not impossible to measure in professions dealing with human services.

Armes and Watkins (1983) found that stressful feelings of faculty stemmed from 'a discrepancy in the minds of professionals between what should be and what in fact is' (p. 13). An assessment of the personal concerns of a group of Master Teachers revealed that what they considered to be stressors could be classified into five categories:

1. **Time.** Pressing time constraints prohibited them from reading and writing, from having enough time to prepare courses, from interacting closely with students, from having time available to spend with their families.

2. **Money.** College faculty felt that they were not amply rewarded for their efforts, at least not as well paid as other professionals, making them feel that their work was not considered valuable to society.

3. **Reputation.** The subjects believed that college teaching no longer brings the recognition it deserves, a feeling accentuated by prominent news stories bemoaning the limited skills of today's students and highly critical of the teaching profession in general.

4. **Significance.** More regularly college faculty were asking, "Does what I do matter?" Much of the personal and professional significance of their performance came from students, and with time pressures and larger classes, meaningful communication with students had become sparse or nonexistent.

5. **The future.** Faculty were anxious about the rate of change in technology and in the world, and the gap between changes and educational institutions' ability to catch up and stay abreast of new developments.

In 1983, a major national study (Gmelch, Wilke, & Lovrich) was undertaken to determine the causes and consequences of stress experienced by college faculty. Stress was defined as any characteristic of the job environment that posed a threat to the individual—either excessive demands or insufficient resources. The results support claims made by other researchers, and the predominant finding of similarity among faculty responses provides rather strong evidence for the existence of a fairly diffuse problem of stress in university settings as opposed to more discipline-specific problems.

In general, faculty reported that 60 percent of the total stress in their lives came from work. Of the three functions performed by most faculty in higher education--teaching, research, and service activities--teaching was designated as most stressful. The reward structure prevalent in the university appeared to be the source of a significant number of stressors. Specifically, the study revealed that the ten most troublesome areas were: (1) imposing excessively high self-expectations, (2) securing financial support for research, (3) having insufficient time to keep abreast with current events in their field, (4) receiving low pay for work done, (5) striving for publication of individual research, (6) feeling that they were continually overloaded with work, (7) interference of job demands with personal activities, (8) lack of progress in their careers, (9) interruptions from telephone and drop-in visitors, and (10) meetings. It may be noted that the majority of these ten top stressors relate directly to time and/or resource complaints.

Grahn (1981) found that work-related areas of stress clustered around functions of organization and managment, including advancement, compensation, and institutional organization and policies. Another study by Bender and Blackwell (1982) indicated that salary, institutional support, and institutional policies were the three highest ranking sources of stress for all faculty. Crase (1980) stated:

> Across the country college and university faculty are losing confidence in their ability to impact on significant matters affecting higher education. Their ability to improve their own lot and to control their own environment has also been decreasing year by year. Consequently, many faculty have slipped into a holding pattern and are 'treading water' as they move silently toward retirement. (p. 120)

He went on to say:

> Many faculty have discovered that their efforts are powerless and fruitless when attempting to effect desirable change. They now distrust administrators; committee functions are viewed as ineffective, time-consuming models for decision making. Confidence has even eroded in the ability of organized faculty groups . . . to make decisions that significantly affect the academic environment. (p. 120)

Certainly, the academic world has not been immune to the struggles and uncertainties rooted in society's ills. Professionals in academe have been compelled to adjust their behaviors regarding their personal and professional lives, changes that help to induce excessive stress. The stress factor has thus become a powerful force in the work performance of teachers and counselors. Staying in the educa-

tional profession and maintaining a sense of idealism and vitality in the face of increasing pressures is a major challenge facing educators today. College faculty and human service professionals live in a highly competitive world and are subject to many of the same stressors as individuals in the business community. Because of their dissatisfactions with their work and/or the institution, the exodus of college faculty to private business is growing rapidly. The teaching profession has lost much of its public esteem and trust, and the ideal of becoming a scholar has become tarnished. From the research cited here, it may be concluded that for many, unfortunately, academe is no longer an attractive, remunerative, or confident way of life.

BURNOUT

Everyone experiences stress of some sort in activities related to their jobs. Indeed, it would be impossible to work productively and efficiently without generating some degree of stress. Negative physical stressors such as excessive noise or lack of air conditioning or crowded work space can exact a daily toll on workers' defenses. Negative psychosocial stressors such as lack of job satisfaction, little recognition for performance, or an unremitting competitive atmosphere can exhaust workers' capacity to adapt. It is when such stressors continue for a long period of time that the individual's ability to cope with the pressures becomes overloaded, exhaustion ensues, and the person becomes susceptible to burnout.

Burnout is a distinctive kind of job-related stress. It is the result of unrelieved stressors that inhibit or destroy the person's capacity to function effectively because the body's resources for resisting stress have become exhausted. Research indicates that individuals engaged in the helping professions or human services are especially susceptible to burnout. Maslach and Jackson (1979), who did some of the initial studies of burnout, define the phenomenon as:

> A syndrome of emotional exhaustion and cynicism that frequently occurs among individuals who do 'people work'--spend considerable time in close encounters with others under conditions of chronic tension and stress. (p. 5)

Other researchers (Pines, Aronson, & Kafry, 1981) state that burnout is:

> The result of constant or repeated pressure associated with an intense involvement with people over long periods of time. Such intense involvement is particularly prevalent in health education and social service occupations, where professionals have a calling to take care of other people's psychological, social, and physical problems. (p. 15)

The manifestations of burnout are easily recognizable. Perhaps the best description of the symptoms of burnout has been given by Freudenberger (1980):

> Exhaustion, detachment, boredom and cynicism, impatience and heightened irritability, a sense of impotence, a feeling of being unappreciated, paranoia, disorientation, psychosomatic complaints, depression, and denial of feelings. (p. 61)

Not a pretty picture, and not just a malaise or temporary indisposition. Rather, burnout is an unhealthy condition that makes once idealistic, productive, enthusiastic workers detriments to their profession, their colleagues, and themselves.

Because burnout affects the whole person, including intellectual, mental, emotional, social, and physical performance, the negative consequences can be enormous, and can lead to professional deterioration and dysfunction of physical and psychological health.

The vitality and commitment of teachers and helping professionals are sapped in a variety of ways, many of which have already been described as stressors, but others that are directly applicable to teaching and counseling. Melendez and de Guzman (1983) in their research report on burnout cite six factors in the academic environment that contribute to stress and thus may lead to burnout:

1. **Role dynamics.** Undefined expectations on the part of faculty, conflict between role and values, conflicting roles, too many or too difficult tasks, role ambiguity.

2. **Responsibility.** Feeling responsible when students do not learn or counselees do not heal, unmotivated and apathetic students, excessive strain from giving oneself emotionally to others.

3. **Occupation.** Lack of fit between the worker's skills and orientations and the job, a sense of helplessness and powerlessness because of lack of autonomy, a personality unsuited for the work role.

4. **Job satisfaction.** Lack of input in decision making, work overload, lack of appreciation for work performed, low salary, dissatisfaction with working conditions.

5. **Career paths.** Slow progression in promotion or status, vague criteria for tenure, disillusionment with the job, limited opportunity for advancement, no more professional ladders to climb.

6. **The organization.** Lack of academic freedom, thwarting of creativity, focus on economic priorities rather than pursuit of knowledge, uncertainty about tenure, lack of support for research, lack of recognition for superior service, lack of feeling of community, time constraints that inhibit socialization.

Strangely enough, burnout usually affects the most productive individuals, because to become burned out means that at some time the person has been 'on fire.' For example, an individual is offered a teaching or counseling position and enters the halls of the university with high hopes, excitement, enthusiasm, a strong desire to achieve, and a commitment to excellence—but, alas, without security. The struggle to get on the tenure track ensues, and constant professional demands, often conflicting with personal obligations, cause the person to live at an extremely

stressful pace, trying to balance the tasks of teaching, preparing courses, meeting with students, serving on committees, engaging in scholarly writing, and maintaining a happy family. The individual probably encounters many institutional pressures, among them the requirement to publish, overloaded classes, the necessity to teach entry-level courses or subjects for which he or she is not prepared, and unwillingness of senior faculty members to act as mentors. The faculty member continues to put forth full effort, but rewards are sparse and all of the slots for promotion are filled. Gradually the individual's hopes become shattered and the resulting letdown starts the process of burnout.

The problem of burnout has been addressed as a separate issue here because the phenomenon is a unique outcome of stress. Someone has said that burnout is sweeping through the halls of academe like the Asian flu. Academic institutions are paying increased attention to burnout because it does affect the most competent and committed, the persons who feel strongly about the value of what they do and want to do their best. 'One of the great costs of burnout is the diminution of the effective service of the very best people in a given profession' (Pines, et al., 1981, p. 4). The individual who is simply treading water waiting for retirement or who is indifferent to the job is certainly not likely to burn out. Thus, the real tragedy of burnout is that it harms the very people who are committed to serving others with the keenest understanding and insight.

STUDENT DISTRESS

Anyone who has been to college is aware of the numerous potential sources of stress for the university student, but only recently has research on this issue begun to accumulate. A search of the ERIC data base and professional journals reveals that most documents concerning stress and its effects on students stem from the beginning of this decade. Bayley (1984) has said that 'stress on college campuses has reached near epidemic proportions' (p. 139). And an article on 'student shock' in the Wall Street Journal (June 1, 1983) reports an average ten percent increase in college center psychological counseling in the past five years.

While the literature is replete with research on low achievers, dropouts, and students requiring special education, studies of stress in relation to college life are far less numerous. In the last few years, several researchers have studied the symptoms and effects of stress in particular student populations, e.g., stress and business student achievement (Bayley, 1984); stress, sex role, and swimmers (Gackenbach, 1981); stress and junior medical students (Linn & Zeppa, 1984); the relationship of marital status to stress among dental students (Musser & Lloyd, 1985); gender differences and stress among medical and law students (Clark & Rieker, 1986); stress and teacher education students (Kaplan, 1980); stress for women entering male-dominated professions (Gerdes, Sunday, & Imperatrice, 1981); loneliness and friendship for college freshmen (Ross, 1979); and stress and academic achievement (Bentley, 1982; Bentley, Floyd, & Steyert, 1980; Heinrich, 1979). Other studies have reported on stress factors for college students in general (Johnson, 1978; Morgan, 1982; Slem, 1983, Villanova & Bownas, 1984). Of the kinds of stress experienced by students, the most frequently studied and the area which appears to have elicited the most research for the longest stretch of time is test anxiety (see the research review in Sacks, Everson, & Tobias, 1982).

It has been noted that major life changes are often accompanied by symptoms of stress. The young person entering college is moving into a brand new environment, i.e., experiencing what is often the most important transition the individual has yet encountered in life. Even for students who live at home, the sheer size of the campus, the large numbers of students, and often complicated registration procedures can be unnerving; the realization of the scope of college life can produce a reaction similar to shock. As they embark on their first year at college,

some students become overwhelmed by the multiplicity of responsibilities facing them (Kaplan, 1980). They appear to have difficulty in organizing their lives so as to allow sufficient time for study, social interactions, and personal commitments. They also have to deal with changes in their relationships with home base, moving from the dependent parent/child model of school days to a new independence.

Evidence from several studies suggests that academic performance is the most critical concern of students as they enter college. Even when they have done well academically in high school, the demands of college courses and the level of competition they will encounter are as yet unknown to them, and they have fears about their ability to cope successfully. That they are solely responsible when it comes to studying or not studying, attending or skipping classes, and managing their academic and social activities, without prodding or nagging or encouragement from concerned parents or teachers, makes some students feel anchorless and anxious. These fears, coupled with the need to 'belong,' to make friends and to be successful socially in a new world can make the college experience highly stressful, especially for first-year students. As has been observed, people are not threatened (stressed) when they feel that they are capable of handling anticipated pressures. It is the fear that their resources are unequal to the demands that produces the stress response.

Because stressful events or conditions are dependent on individual perception, i.e., are deemed stressful according to the eye of the beholder, studies of student stress utilize the self-report method. Variances occur between first-year and other levels of college students, between students who commute and reside on campus, between older and younger students, between single and married students, among students in different departments. It is not the purpose of this discussion to report research findings in detail. Rather, the authors have attempted to condense several studies and to lump the findings into broad categories of stressors which appear to be common to the greatest number of students, regardless of their year in college, place of residence, age, marital status, or course of study.

Current investigations of stress among college students concur in their findings that students are subject to a number of serious stressors, among them the following: academic competition, financial hardship, concern about interpersonal relationships including sex life, balancing work with study, relationships with instructors, and amount of course work. According to a number of studies, problems that are perceived to be most intense sources of stress are examinations

and grades, financial concerns, fear of failure on specific assignments, and career decisions.

One of the most comprehensive investigations was undertaken by Johnson (1978), who surveyed over 2,000 students regarding what they felt were sources of stress in the university. The following nine categories emerged from the data, and they are outlined here because they are supported by the results of numerous other studies. They are listed in order of importance.

1. **Instruction.** Needed academic help, course requirements, problems with instruction or academic advisement, problems with concentration, difficulty in studying, test anxiety, unclear assignments.

2. **Competition.** Grade point averages, cheating, using the Bell Curve for grading.

3. **Organization of time.** Lack of personal leisure time, time for part-time work, time for a satisfying social life, time for studying.

4. **Adjustment to college.** Transition from high school to college, need for more personalized treatment, living away from home for the first time, how to deal with dissatisfactions with the college.

5. **Administrative problems.** Registration procedures, red tape, finding out requirements for graduation, facilities, communication.

6. **Social adjustment.** Roommate conflicts, social pressures involving sex, inter-racial tension, interpersonal relationships, adjustment to a new role with the family.

7. **Finances.** Insufficient funds, getting money from Financial Aid, inability to participate in social activities because of limited funds.

8. **Housing.** Overcrowding, lack of privacy, noise, worry about getting university housing.

9. **Transportation.** Parking problems, bus service, amount of time spent commuting.

If one major generalization could be made, one major conclusion could be drawn, from an analysis of the research regarding student stress, it is that the most critical stressors have to do with the instructional process itself, the very thing for which students come to college in the first place. Students repeatedly express their concerns over grades and examinations and difficulties in studying. Anxiety about the first two items can actually exacerbate the third. Some of the symptoms of stress are mental confusion and an inability to focus on the task at hand, which

suggests that the process of studying itself is more vulnerable to disruption than other forms of activity. The intrusion of irrelevant thoughts and the inability to resist distractions can cause an attentional deficit which impairs students' ability to concentrate. Clearly, if instructors understand the enormity of their role in promoting student satisfaction and the critical impact that their mode of teaching, including scheduling of examinations and assignment of grades, has on student performance, it is probable that much of the stress experienced by college students could be alleviated.

WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT STRESS?

Many educators, be they counselors or teachers, subscribe to the popular notion that people in academic professions live cloistered and stressless lives, though they themselves may have had experiences which indicate that a high element of pressure is associated with their work. They may even have chosen their particular career with the expectation that it would be relatively stressless. As previously discussed, however, there is ample evidence to suggest that people who engage in helping and service-oriented occupations such as teaching and counseling are much more likely to experience distress than people who do not. Therefore, it is important for faculty members to be aware of the fact that they are likely to encounter many situations that will be stressful, and start early on the process of stress management. Ignorance of the stress phenomenon and its relationship to counseling and teaching can lead to false expectations on the part of the academic professional, increase the sources of distress, and minimize the person's awareness of the need to develop an effective strategy for coping with stress.

Unfortunately, what may well have been an adequate approach to dealing with stress in the past may no longer suffice in today's era of rapid change and increased pressures. Downsizing, reductions in salary, demands for educational reform, new pressures for academic excellence, and uncertainty over longevity are just a few of the pressures and stressors that are building within the academic environment. Whereas in previous years faculty may have felt very much in charge and in control of their careers, many professionals are now experiencing a disturbing sense of an inability to cope adequately. This increasing feeling of distress could exist because faculty members continue to apply methods of dealing with stress that no longer suffice. Many faculty may have given little thought to the need for a systematic approach to dealing with stress, assuming that if they continue their previously productive and rewarding behavior they will continue to reap the benefits that they enjoyed in the past. Our experience would suggest quite the opposite. First, many previous strategies used by faculty for coping with stress were at best "seat-of-the-pants," and were successful only because the environmental stressors that they experienced were fairly minimal and they were able to "muddle by" without any conscious effort to deal with them. Second, to be productive in the academic

environment today and experience a sense of achievement and reward requires that people deal proactively with stress. Taking a proactive stance toward stress enables faculty members to manage it far more ably than they could through either denial or ignorance, and allows them to devote less time and effort to understanding and coping with stressful phenomena.

It is important that faculty members focus not only on their own ability to manage stress but also on ways of helping others in the educational environment, particularly students, to minimize and cope more effectively with academic stressors. Faculty members must begin the process of stress management by examining their own personal means of handling the stressors in their academic lives. Professional educators who exhibit clear signs of distress and whose behavior can only be explained as a stress reaction are likely to be poor models for others with whom they interact, particularly students; and, even worse, they may unwittingly be "stress carriers," that is, responsible for inducing distress in others, either in group or class situations or in individual interactions with students or peers. This first step for faculty members, then, entails looking into their own lives and undertaking a proactive program of stress management. Having developed a better understanding of stress and its effect upon themselves, faculty members can then more knowledgeably and with better understanding reach out to help students deal more effectively with the stressors in their lives. More important, they will be able to perform their counseling and teaching in ways that will minimize the harmful effects of stress and provide an appropriate balance between stress which motivates and stress which debilitates.

Faculty Stress

Faculty methods of coping with stress may be classified into two major categories: (1) primarily preventative strategies, and (2) primarily combative strategies ("Stress Counseling," 1986). Preventative strategies are those intended to avoid or ward off stress by thoughtful and careful life planning that confines stress to minimal and manageable levels. Combative strategies are those that provide ways of coping with stress when and if it occurs. However effective such approaches are at preventing or ameliorating stressors in life, it is likely that some distress will manifest itself in some situations and at some times in the life of

every academician. Therefore, it behooves even the most effective faculty members to build an armamentarium of combative strategies for dealing with those times and occasions when they have not been able to prevent particular stressors from intruding into their lives and work. A comprehensive and practical approach would call for all faculty to learn about and use preventative strategies which will help them to avoid stressors, and at the same time to develop combative strategies for escaping or minimizing the harmful effects of stressors when they do occur.

Preventative Stress-Coping Strategies for Faculty

Four primarily preventative strategies are listed below.

1. Avoiding stressors through appropriate life adjustments.
2. Managing the expectations and demands made upon oneself.
3. Changing stress-inducing ways of behaving and responding.
4. Augmenting one's coping resources.

Avoiding stressors through appropriate life adjustments. A very basic way of preventing undue stress is to establish a lifestyle designed to avoid unnecessary stressors. One such stressor might take the form of feeling mired in a relationship that frequently brings about stress and that appears to hold little or no reward. Another might relate to holding a faculty position that makes few demands upon an individual's talents and strengths and calls for the person to perform in ways that are essentially dissatisfying. In such situations, the person should attempt to develop more nurturing relationships and find a more suitable job, even though these adjustments and changes may themselves entail considerable stress. However stressful the changes might prove to be, in the long run they may eliminate the sense of entrapment and discouragement which leads to mounting frustration and debilitating stress reactions. Faculty often underestimate their ability to create an environment and/or a working style that suits themselves, and do relatively little through their own efforts to bring about wholesome changes. Faculty need to analyze their present academic environment, decide which aspects are desirable and which are undesirable, and then attempt to make changes in those relationships and responsibilities which are ongoing contributors to an unhealthy level of stress.

Managing the expectations and demands made upon oneself. The second preventative strategy is analyzing the expectations and demands made upon oneself and working to make them more appropriate for one's individual needs and work

style. Counselors and faculty members often have unrealistic expectations regarding how many articles they will write or how many improvements they can make in their program or services. Frequently, these wishes remain fantasies rather than operational goals. But they exist as expectations which are not met; they plague the professional and contribute to a sense of lack of accomplishment and control. Knowing the extent of one's ability to manage demands and setting up a plan that allows one to differentiate between demands of maximum importance and demands that are important but that can, if necessary, be dispensed with can help the faculty member to keep tasks in perspective--doing what he or she must do and then, if time and effort permit, doing something beyond. Dealing with demands in this fashion will focus faculty members' efforts on what is most important, and will also contribute to their sense of well-being by enabling them to feel good about what they are able to accomplish beyond those activities that are absolutely crucial in their work.

Changing stress-inducing ways of behaving and responding. Most of us are aware of how we respond to pressure--whether we tend to be anxious or worry unduly, whether we tend to focus endlessly on hurtful or potentially hurtful situations, whether we tend to exhibit Type A behavior, feeling a sense of great time urgency and competitiveness. Research suggests that being able to identify rationally the presence of such behavior within ourselves and learning to adopt counter-behaviors can be helpful. There is the person, for example, who feels extremely anxious and angry over being tied up in traffic just sitting in the car, losing valuable time that could be better spent on reading and writing. Having recognized this tendency within himself or herself, the individual could use the time to listen to presentations from various conferences on tape or catch up on his or her reading by plugging in a talking book. The key here is to recognize one's own behavior patterns that regularly contribute to stress and find alternative ways of responding to situations that trigger unproductive behaviors.

Augmenting one's coping resources. Perhaps the most important preventative strategy is to focus consciously on increasing one's own personal resources. A useful way for people to do this is to make a personal assessment of their assets such as confidence, a sense of control, healthy self-esteem, the ability to manage time well, their support group of helpful friends and colleagues, their financial assets. By specifically identifying these resources, individuals may become aware of the presence of more strengths within and without themselves than they had

heretofore realized, and, even more important, begin to think of ways to use these different positive forces in a more synergistic fashion. People who know their strengths and how to call upon them in a variety of unknown situations and challenges are likely to avoid a panic response when confronted with a demand that seems insurmountable. They can use these strengths to sort out the requirements of a new challenge and gear up for the most effective response.

Combative Stress-Coping Strategies for Faculty

Five types of primarily combative strategies are presented below.

1. Stress monitoring.
2. Marshalling personal resources.
3. Taking direct action either to eliminate or lessen the power of stressors.
4. Developing greater tolerance for stresses which cannot be eliminated.
5. Lowering stress arousal.

Stress monitoring. Monitoring the build-up of stressors and being aware of stress-related symptoms within oneself is a necessary first step toward the effective use of other combative strategies. One's level of stress can be monitored. An individual can learn to identify stress in its early stages by being aware of his or her own feelings and reactions. Knowing that one is under stress, however, is not enough. One must have clearly in mind other methods of combative coping and feel confident about putting them into action. Awareness of a problem without knowledge of how to respond to it is likely to exacerbate the situation and make the person feel increasingly incapable of dealing with it.

Marshalling personal resources. Marshalling one's own resources is a key step in combative coping. When faced with a difficult stressor, we tend almost instinctively to surface our inadequacies and anxieties and to ignore or downplay our strengths. With a systematic approach to stress management, one's first question might be, "What strengths do I bring to bear against this stressor? How have I dealt with similar situations in the past? Was I effective in doing so? How can I learn from previous experience and translate my successes in the past to the present situation?" Calling upon others for assistance, which is another combative strategy in itself, can help individuals to realize and use their own personal resources with more telling effect.

Taking direct action either to eliminate or lessen the power of stressors. A key combative strategy is a direct frontal attack upon the stressor. This approach has the advantage of not only possibly eliminating the source of the stress, but also increasing an individual's confidence in his or her ability to manage stress, thereby fostering a greater sense of control and self-esteem. Among the more effective means of attacking stressors is the adoption of a problem-solving mode--the individual defines the problem; seeks appropriate information; questions assumptions that might limit possible options; identifies alternatives and considers the consequences of each; takes action on the most promising alternative; and, after experience, makes changes if necessary. Faculty members are by nature thoughtful and analytical, and the problem-solving approach is one in which they are already well versed as a result of their academic pursuits, one that they can usually exercise with both confidence and skill. When stressors are interpersonal rather than situational, they can often be reduced through assertive action--speaking up for what one believes, confronting delicate issues, and/or refusing inappropriate requests or delegating responsibilities to another person or committee. Assertive responses can serve very well to minimize stress imposed by others. Not only can assertive behavior help a professional deal with immediate stressors, it also may discourage similar kinds of future demands, as the faculty member and others observe its effectiveness.

Developing greater tolerance for stresses which cannot be eliminated. There are some aspects of our environment that we can do little to change--for example, the particular dean or director, or the position the department plays in the overall organization. Cognitive restructuring can be a very useful way of helping people to deal more adequately with built-in mental sets regarding how they perceive themselves or their situations. These negative views may take the form of critical self-evaluation or unnecessary exaggeration of the potentially harmful or painful effects of a given event or experience. Cognitive restructuring is based upon the concept that by objectively reviewing a situation, an individual can minimize the negative consequences of failure, recognize potential positive outcomes that may accrue from temporary failure, or come to understand that the situation is not as difficult as it may have appeared initially, particularly in contrast to what others may be going through. It is highly desirable that counselors and other faculty members cognitively structure and restructure their lives in ways that illuminate the potentialities and opportunities rather than emphasize the deficits and debits in their daily experiences.

Lowering stress arousal. One way to minimize the debilitating effects of stress is to attempt to block it out of one's consciousness. To keep a stressor out of mind helps to eliminate its impact. Admittedly, suppressing and/or ignoring a troublesome issue is generally not a wise coping mechanism, but as part of an overall response, the ability to put a stressful topic or situation aside can be helpful. Faculty members who continually focus upon the injustice or the unfairness of something which has occurred in their work make themselves unduly sensitive and exacerbate their anxiety; whereas, if they avoided thinking about it, the simple passage of time might well lessen its negative consequences.

Lowering stress arousal helps people to function with better effectiveness even though stress is present. Three methods are useful in this regard. The first is vigorous exercise. Related to vigorous exercise are several tension-reducing procedures such as deep muscle relaxation, prescribed breathing, and meditation. The second is to use the time-honored approach of removing oneself completely from the situation and engaging in nonacademic amusement activities. A third way to ameliorate the arousal effect of various stressors is to use self-disclosure, either with an intimate friend or with a larger support network. While it was stated earlier that deliberate suppression sometimes works, there is considerable evidence that attempting to squelch emotional responses to stressors may actually increase their harmful effects. By talking about a given issue and examining aloud the reasons why it is stressful, people frequently find that they are not the only ones who have experienced that particular problem--which in itself tends to soothe their anxiety. Voicing their concern and interacting with others about it lessens the power of the stressor. Associated with that positive outcome is the definite benefit of strengthening one's support network by controlled disclosure to others, which, in turn, makes them more aware of one's need for assistance and increases their own readiness and capacity to offer help. People who "stew in their own juice" are much less likely to be able to minimize the arousal effect of stress. Those faculty members who seek out confidantes in the lounge or over coffee to say, "Hey, this is really bugging me. What do you think?" can profit greatly from this interactive disclosure. Clearly, there is a need to exercise discretion in what and how much one chooses to disclose, but on balance professionals are probably inclined to disclose too little rather than too much.

We have suggested a total of nine preventative and combative approaches that faculty members can employ in dealing with stress. In practice the difference between preventative and combative strategies will become diffused, as learning these skills can be thought of as preventative while actually using them is best defined as combative. In fact, most people find themselves using a combination of the two. The individual who can master these preventative and combative strategies is the one most able to manage stress in all of its diverse forms. While the achievement of consummate skill in all of the strategies may be unrealistic, it certainly seems appropriate and reasonable for faculty to become knowledgeable about and be able to use at least some of them.

The degree to which faculty members are able to self-learn and self-manage the stress coping strategies described here depends on their individual psychological training and sophistication. As a group, counselors are likely to be aware of the psychological principles fundamental to each of the different stress coping strategies, even if they are not fully informed on the specific procedures associated with each. Continued practice with the various methods is likely to bring noticeable improvement in a person's ability to manage and cope with stress. Where the individual places the emphasis depends primarily on the nature of the stressful situation and the stressors to which the person is particularly vulnerable. Faculty members of comparable rank in the same department or program may find themselves undergoing far different forms of stress. Therefore, it seems particularly important that every faculty member take responsibility for assessing his or her own stress profile and decide what stress coping strategy is individually most appropriate.

Strategies for Helping to Reduce Stress among Students

To help students manage stress requires that faculty members take neither too hard nor too soft a stand. Some stress is desirable in that it promotes student motivation and involvement, whereas excessive stress can inhibit a student's spontaneity and initiative and cause ineffective, even self-defeating behavior. The counselor who helps a student deal effectively with stress is performing a service of lasting value, as the ability to cope with stress in the variety of situations associated with formal education may be one of the most, if not the most,

important life-long learning skills that a person can acquire. Following are several suggestions for specific interventions that faculty members can undertake to help students optimize the stress factor in their lives--furnishing sufficient stress that they are challenged, but not so much that they are overcome (Whitman, Spendlove, & Clark, 1986).

1. **Be explicit and extremely clear on all expectations and responsibilities for students and communicate these to students in such a way that they feel free to question and further discuss any that they do not fully understand.** A frequent generator of stress for students is lack of clarity regarding expected behaviors and responsibilities. This fuzziness and ambiguity can be extremely frustrating whether it relates to the work for a given course or a counseling relationship. Students are able to respond surprisingly well to a wide range of obligations, but they have difficulty, as anyone does, when expectations are unknown or changed without consultation, or when they are unaware of the precise nature of the tasks they must perform. It is particularly helpful to provide regular and consistent feedback to students on their work and behavior. This may take the form of verbal comments, written notes on papers, and general discussions with students on assignments and actions. This structuring gives students a clear understanding of the norm of expectations and allows them, through interaction with the faculty member, to clarify their understandings.

2. **Develop a positive interactive relationship with students.** Interactive student-centered relationships serve to quell the conflicts and misunderstandings that frequently develop between students and faculty. The informal and relatively unstructured relationship not only can be extremely meaningful to students in sharing information and promoting rapport but also can provide an adult model of desired behavior. Such a relationship can assist students to sense how well they are progressing, establish meaningful goals, and clarify important priorities and outcomes.

3. **Adopt a distinct and defensible reward structure.** One of the areas of greatest frustration and irritation for students is an unclear reward structure, whether it involves their individual assignments, group projects, or class behavior. Lack of understanding regarding what is rewarded and what is not rewarded leads students to engage in random behavior. Making priorities extremely clear and explaining fully the criteria to be used in assessing a given behavior or performance contributes greatly to student understanding of rewards such as grades and recommendations.

4. Assist students to acquire at least a modicum sense of control over their student roles. It is harsh and even debilitating for students, or anyone for that matter, to find themselves in a situation where they are unable to control either the means or the goals by their own personal behavior. Such a state works negatively toward building self-esteem and a sense of adequacy, and leaves students feeling as though they are pawns to be maneuvered as seen fit by faculty. Involving students and clients in matters relating to establishing goals, ways of achieving goals, and the specific topics or areas to be prioritized acts to increase their innate potential to manage a wide variety of difficult pressure point situations.

5. Treat students as individuals rather than as a generalized whole. No two students will have exactly the same pattern of stressors or the same level of stress arousal or the same ability to cope with stress. Therefore, it is essential that any faculty member who attempts to help students manage stress should avoid prescriptive formulae and focus attention instead on the specific pressures and particular pattern of stress response of individual students.

6. Assist students to adopt and adapt the previously described stress coping strategies. Stress coping strategies that are effective for faculty members can be helpful to students as well, as they deal with a variety of challanges and stressors. Probably not all of the coping strategies will be appropriate, but such ones as problem solving and the development of support networks are likely to be useful to a large majority of students. Faculty members can help students to learn and use these strategies by describing them in detail and giving examples of how they themselves and other students have adopted and adapted them to their own particular situations. Faculty self-disclosure as to their own need to develop coping strategies and their experiences in using various approaches in different situations can be motivating as well as instructive to students.

Faculty members are often unaware of the critical importance of their role in students' lives. Earlier we pointed out that the instructional process itself is perhaps the major source of student stress—the grading system, test anxiety, uncertainty about course requirements, difficulty with studying, competition with other students. Because stress reactions interfere with concentration and the ability to perform to best advantage, it would behoove those who assume leadership in instruction and academic advisement to be alert to symptoms of stress, to be aware of ways of helping students who appear to be suffering from stress, and, above all, to attempt to teach and counsel in ways that avoid stress arousal.

The six faculty behaviors we suggest here are an integral part of the teaching and counseling of the most competent and sensitive professional educators, but they are not practiced by all of those with responsibility for student development. Each is a learnable skill, and, if acquired and used by faculty members, will enhance their own professional expertise and, more important, contribute enormously to student comfort, satisfaction, and success in academic pursuits.

SUMMARY

In this monograph, we have sought to increase readers' knowledge of stress and the factors associated with it, and suggest ways in which they may increase the ability to manage stress both in their own lives and in the lives of their students. The ideas and examples presented should be considered a basic structure upon which each individual faculty member can build his or her own theory of stress reduction and devise those coping strategies which are appropriate for a specific individual in a particular situation at a given moment in time. What we have sought to emphasize is the universality of stressors in the academic environment and the need for each faculty member to set as a major goal the elimination or reduction of the types and the power of stressors which they must cope with both individually and collectively. If this monograph has helped readers to understand stress and symptoms of stress more clearly, to examine cognitively their own personal sources of stress, to explore their personal stress response pattern, and to experiment with various coping strategies and determine what works best for them in a given situation, then the motivation for having written it will have been well served.

REFERENCE LIST

Adams, J. (1978). Improving stress management. Social Change, 8(4), 1-10.

Armes, N., & Watkins, K. (1983). The shadow side of teaching: An analysis of personal concerns. Community College Review, 11(2), 13-19.

Bayley, G. A. (1984). Making the grade: Stress and business student achievement. Journal of Business Education, 59(4), 139-143. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 208 283)

Bender, R. C., & Blackwell, M. W. (1982). Professional expectations, stress, and university faculty: An analysis. Houston, TX: Southern Association for Counselor Education and Supervision.

Bentley, D. A. (1982, April). Reaction to stress as a predictor of academic success. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Georgia Academy of Science, Columbus, GA. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 218 577)

Bentley, D. A., Floyd, B., & Steyert, A. (1980). Stress correlates and academic achievement. Unpublished manuscript, Dalton Junior College, Dalton, GA, and Towson State University, Baltimore. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 208 278)

Buck, V. E. (1972). Working under pressure. New York: Crane, Russak & Co.

Clark, E. J., & Rieker, P. P. (1986). Gender differences in relationships and stress of medical and law students. Journal of Medical Education, 61(6), 32-40.

Cooper, C. L., & Marshall, J. (1976). Occupational sources of stress: A review of the literature relating to coronary heart disease and mental ill health. Journal of Occupational Psychology, 49, 11-28.

Crase, D. (1980). Antecedents of faculty frustration. Physical Educator, 37(3), 118-121.

Freudenberger, H. J. (1980). Burn out: The high cost of high achievement. Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co.

Freudenberger, H. J. (1982). Counseling and dynamics: Treating the end-stage person. In W. S. Paine (Ed.), Job stress and burnout: Research, theory, and intervention perspectives. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.

Friedman, M., & Rosenman, R. H. (1974). Type A behavior and your heart. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Gackenbach, J. (1981, April-May). Collegiate swimmers: Sex differences in self-reported and physiological stress indices. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association, Detroit. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 205 871)

Gerdes, E. P., Sunday, D. S., & Imperatrice, P. A. (1981, April). Women entering traditionally male professions: Relationship of personality measures to achievement and stress. Paper presented at a meeting of the Eastern Psychological Association, New York. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 211 916)

Gmelch, W. H., Wilke, P. K., & Lovrich, N. (1983, April). Sources of stress in academe: A national perspective. Paper presented at a meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, Canada. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 232 518)

Grahn, J. (1981). General college job satisfaction survey. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 208 716)

Heinrich, D. L. (1979). The causal influence of anxiety on academic achievement for students of differing intellectual ability. Applied Psychological Measurement, 3(3), 351-359.

Holmes, T., & Rahe, R. (1967). The Social Readjustment Rating Scale. Journal of Psychosomatic Research, 11, 213-218.

Johnson, E. E. (1978, August). Student-identified stresses that relate to college life. Paper presented at the annual conference of the American Psychological Association, Toronto, Canada. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 170 630)

Kaplan, B. (1980). Patterns of student stress: A profile of teacher education students in their first year of tertiary studies. (Report No. 13). Australia: Nedlands College of Advanced Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 208 283)

Kobasa, S. C., Hilker, R. J., & Maddi, S. R. (1979). Who stays healthy under stress? Journal of Occupational Medicine, 21, 595-598.

Kremer, B., & Owen, W. (1979). Stress in the life of the counselor. School Counselor, 27(1), 40-46.

Lazarus, R. S. (1966). Psychological stress and the coping process. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Linn, B. S., & Zeppa, R. (1984). Stress in junior medical students: Relationship to personality and performance. Journal of Medical Education, 59(1), 7-12.

Maslach, C., & Jackson, S. E. (1979). Burned-out cops and their families. Psychology Today, 12(12), 59-62.

Melendez, W. A., & de Guzman, R. M. (1983). Burnout: The new academic disease. Washington, DC: Association for the Study of Higher Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 242 255)

Miller, W. (1979). Dealing with stress: A challenge for educators. Bloomington, IN: Phi Delta Kappa.

Morgan, C. H., Jr. (1982, April). Personality factors and stress ratings of changes in a college population. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Eastern Psychological Association, Baltimore, MD. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 221 793)

Musser, L. A., & Lloyd, C. (1985). The relationship of marital status and living arrangement to stress among dental students. Journal of Dental Education, 49(8), 573-578.

Pines, A. M., Aronson, E., & Kafry, D. (1981). Burnout: From tedium to personal growth. New York: Macmillan.

Rosenman, R. H., & Friedman, M. (1983). Relationship of Type A behavior pattern to coronary heart disease. In Selye, H. (Ed.), Guide to stress research: Vol. 2. New York: Scientific and Academic Editions.

Ross, A. S. (1979, September). A cohort analysis of loneliness and friendship in the first year of university. Paper presented at the annual convention of the American Psychological Association, New York. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 182 621)

Sacks, J., Everson, H., & Tobias, S. (1982, October). A study of the interaction between anxiety and attention. Paper presented at a meeting of the Northeastern Educational Research Association, Falk View, NY. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 229 713)

Selye, H. (1974). Stress without distress. New York: Lippincott & Crowell.

Selye, H. (1978). The stress of life (2nd ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Slem, C. M. (1983, April). Relationship between classroom absenteeism and stress risk/buffer factors, depressogenic attributional style, depression and classroom academic performance. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Western Psychological Association, San Francisco. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 240 474)

Stress counseling (Special issue). (1986). The Counseling Psychologist, 14(4).

Swent, B., & Gmelch, W. H. (1977). Stress at the desk and how to cope effectively. Eugene, OR: Oregon School Study Council.

Villanova, P., & Bownas, D. A. (1984). Dimensions of college student stress. Paper presented at a conference of the Southeastern Psychological Association. Blacksburg, VA: Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 262 690)

Whitman, N. A., Spendlove, D. C., & Clark, C. H. (1986). Increasing students' learning: A faculty guide to reducing stress among students. Executive summary (ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report 4, 1986). Washington, DC: Association for the Study of Higher Education; ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education.

Woolfolk, R., & Richardson, F. (1978). Stress, sanity, and survival. New York: Monarch.